

A
Serious Exhortation
TO AN
Holy Life.

O R

A Plea for the absolute
necessity of Inherent
Righteousness in those
that hope to be saved.

By *Tho.^R Wadsworth*, Preacher to
the Church at *Newington-
Butts* in *Surrey*.

Heb. 12. 14.

*Follow peace with all men, and holiness,
without which no man shall see the
Lord.*

L O N D O N,

Printed by *R. I.* for *Andrew Kembe*, at
St. Margarets Hill in *Southwark*; And
are to be sold under *St. Margarets Church*
on *New-Fishstreet Hill*. 1663.

British Museum

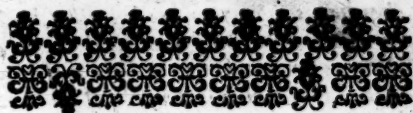
History of the

of the British Museum



Printed by R. Taylor, 1795

Printed by R. Taylor, 1795
of the British Museum
on New-Tonbridge



T O
My poor Parishoners
of Newington-Batts,

Whose souls are precious to
my God and Saviour, and I
dare say to mee.

SIRS,



He remembrance of the
strange Providences of
my God, that were appa-
rent in bringing me to
bee your Teacher, and
have boarn mee company ever since in the
work of my Ministry amongst you,
makes mee think, I was born, and still
continue in the Land of the living for
your sakes, for the service of your im-
mortal souls, to help forward your salva-
tion from that consuming burning wrath

that hangs over your heads, till Christ
be formed in you, and your nature
changed from what is earthly and sen-
sual, to that which is divine; This Ex-
hortation to an Holy life I send you, as be-
ing very confident, that without it, not
one of you shall ever see the face of God
but to your shame and confusion; if I press
it hard upon your consciences, blame mee
not, for it is my full belief, you must bee
damned without it, and my love and pity
to you constrains mee to do my best to pre-
vent so sad a judgement. If you wonder
how I dare venture to speak so much to
you in Print; I tell you I dare do any
thing for your sakes, yea hazard the re-
putation of my discretion, rather than bee
thought defective in my care to your ne-
ver dying spirits. It comes not seldome
to my thoughts, and lyeth not a little
pressing on my spirits, Ah what shall I do
more for poor Newington to help them
towards Heaven before I dye; somewhat I
have done already, as many of you can bear
mee witnesse, when with prayers and tears,
not onely publickly, but from one house
to another, I have beseeched you to bee
reconciled unto God, and it is my
greatest

greatest grief I have found these five years since my coming amongst you, that I have done no more; but alas, what shall I, or what can I do more? I would you could but tell mee; shall I come and live in all your Families, that I may bee continually present to instruct, pray with, comfort, reprove, and over-see you? this is all impossible, I am but one man, and can no more multiply my presence, than I can my person; or shall I daily follow you from house to house? How can it bee? my more publick work is great abroad, and not small at home, besides the care of a selected people lyes upon mee, that presseth more than most men imagine, except them that feel it, and I am but a man, and have but the strength of man, subject to bodily infirmities with my brethren. But however, I shall promise to do my best in this kind as I have begun, & to supply the want of my constant presence with you, I have sent you my whole heart in Print, that it may speak to you when I am absent; it is but little, yet I intended it should have been less, but it is well it is no more. Do but you accept it as kindly as it is offered, and improve it as faithfully, as it was
con-

conscientiously penned, and I shall desire
no more, being very confident it will then
run and prosper; Which is the thing
that is most earnestly prayed for,

By him whom the Lord
hath made your Teacher;

Tho. Wadsworth.

A



A serious Exhortation to an Holy Life.

O R,

A Plea for the absolute necessity of Inherent Righteousness in those that hope to bee saved.

Matth. 5. 20.

I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no case enter into the Kingdome of Heaven.



Say Reader, Thou hast perused the Text, and canst not but see that it concerns thy eternal life, or death. I prethee answer mee this one Question, and then in the fear of God read on.

Reader, Thou art a dying man, or woman, Tell mee when thy breath is
B gone,

gone, thy eyes closed, thy bell hath
towed, and thy body confined up for
the grave, Then, Then, wouldst thou
rather have thy soul in Heaven, or Hell,
in joy, or torment, with God, or Devils?
For Gods sake make a pause, and give
mee thine answer before thou dost pro-
ceed. Tell mee, art thou one that ca-
rest not whither thou goest, or makest
no matter whether it bee to heaven or
hell? Is either of them to thee indiffe-
rent? And art thou resolved to persist
in this indifferency? If it bee so, Sin-
ner, I advise thee throw down the
book, and as thou lovest thy soul, read
not a letter more; For I so love and
pitty thee, as to those sorrows, that with-
in a few days, nay a few hours thou must
certainly endure, that I am loath that
this sheet should helpto wind thee up for
Hell, or any wayes conduce to increase
thy pains, or augment thy torments:
For know Sinner, This is the nature of
that Gospel of Christ which wee preach
or write, that it either softens or har-
dens; It is a favour of life to life, or
of death to death, to him that reads or
hears it: It will either prepare thee for
Hea-

Heaven, or ripen thee for Hell? for of that very Jesus by whom onely thou canst hope for salvation, it was prophesied, *Luke 20. 34. Behold this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel.*

Reader, perswade thy self of this, That Jesus Christ, and his written or preached Gospel, if they prove not means to the raising thee from that state of sin and death, wherein by nature thou liest, they will prove the instruments of that fatal fall, that thou shalt never recover to eternity: and of this very nature are these lines thou art now perusing. (being I am confident according to the minde of God) I say therefore again, if thou art one that hast lived an unrighteous, ungodly life, and resolvest not to change, I beseech thee cast by the book, and do not read it, for why should it do any thing to promote thy ruine?

But if thou art a man or woman that canst not dare to think of being damned, but tremblest at the very name or thought of it; if thou dost heartily desire, when thou leavest this poor, empty, miserable world, to exchange it for that

full, rich, and glorious Kingdom of God above, then come away, and I will lead thee into the path of life, and tell thee what a man or woman thou must bee, and what a life thou mayest and must live, if ever thou hopest to live in that desired and incomparably blessed inheritance of the Saints.

Hoping now I have got a serious attentive soul to speak to, for such Reader, I presume thou art, let mee first make bold to press thee to a review of the text.

I say unto you, Except your Righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, yee can in no case enter into the Kingdome of Heaven.

This verse is a part of that Bible, that thou and I, and all the Christian world do take to bee the word of God, which is as free from any lye or falshood as the Sun-beams are from darkness; I shall not therefore injure thee so much (as if I did mistrust thee) to ask whether thou beleevest this portion of Scripture to bee true or false, but rather dost thou beleeve, that it is so written there as here it is transcribed, if thou doubtst, take thy Bible, and turn to the Chapter
and

and the Verse: if thou wilt take it for granted, on my word, I profess, I have not, I would not deceive thee for a world.

The first part of the Text opened.

(*I say unto you*) To you, Who are those? Why thole that were present at that time, in which Christ was preaching this Sermon; they were his Disciples, his followers, such as owned him for their Saviour, and called him Lord and Christ; in a word, they were such as thou professest thy self to bee that art my Reader.

2 *I say unto you*, who is this (1)? It was hee that preached the Sermon, Jesus Christ, it was Christ and not *Matthew* that did record it; it was Christ, and not I, that am about to plead with thee at this time for thy life. And now thou knowest the Author, I presume the Text will have some authority upon thy heart. I hope thou wilt not say of Jesus Christ, as the prophane worldlings say of us, his Ministers, that wee are a company of prating sawcy fellows, and they hope, that all is not true that wee say, and

6 *A serious Exhortation*

they are confident that God is more merciful than wee Preachers would make them beleeve. But think Reader, it is not I, nor any Minister on earth, that is the Preacher in my Text, it is Jesus Christ the Master of us all, and canst thou hope it is not true that Christ here tells thee? were not this all one; as to hope Jesus Christ is a lyar, and is not this to make thy self a blasphemer? or darcest thou bee so impudent to say, or think, that God is more merciful than Christ hath made him? what canst thou think thy gracious Saviour would deceive thee, or that the Son of God would make false reports of God his Father, he tells thee the contrary, if thou hast a minde to beleeve him, *Joh. 12. 49. I have not spoken of my self, but the Father which sent mee; hee gave mee Commandement what I should say, and what I should speak.* And wilt thou dare yet to unsay all his sayings, though hee tells thee, hee sayes nothing, but what God his Father commanded him? If hee tells thee plainly, *Except thy righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, thou shalt in no case enter*

enter into the Kingdome of heaven, Wilt thou boldly contradict all, and say, that notwithstanding what ever Jesus Christ hath said, I yet hope to bee saved? yea though thou hast no righteousness at all, or such as falls short of what the Pharisees had; wilt thou give the lye both to God the Father, and the Son?

No sinner, no, I know thou hast not such hard thoughts of the Saviour of the world, to think hee is a lyar. Thou callest him Jesus Christ, and confessest him to bee the Son of God, and that it is impossible hee should lye; yea I know thou wilt confesse hee here speaks true, and what hee speaks, hee speaks to thee, *That except thy righteousness exceeds that of the Pharisees, thou canst by no means bee saved.* Doest thou beleve it? Answer mee: Doest thou verily beleve, That except thou *A. B.* by name, provest a more righteous man or woman than ever any Scribe or Pharisee was, thou canst in no case enter into heaven? Come Come, I know thou belevest it; as thou lovest heaven, then, for thine own soul, I intreat thee pronounce these words after mee, but

Speak them seriously to thine own conscience. *I, M, B, Who am reading this book, do in the presence of God, that searcheth my heart, and will judge mee at the last day, do unfeignedly beleve, that except I am by the power of the Spirit, through the preaching of the Word, made a more righteous man or woman than ever any Scribe or Pharisee, yea and this before I dye, I never hope by any means to enter into the Kingdome of heaven, but must assuredly, as now I am reading, within a few dayes bee in everlasting torments, where I shall weep and wail, and gnash my teeth without all remedy.*

Hast thou confessed so much? yea, and unfeignedly? yea, as in the presence of God the searcher of thy heart? Yea.

Well said: Now let mee tell thee, thou hast taken one step towards heaven, thou art half way there already. Ah sinner, bee not so much thine own enemy, as to withdraw thy foot, and recall thy words! why shouldest thou repent that step that is taken towards a Kingdome that is so blessed, or draw in that breath that hath filled thy sails,
and

and will make thy voyage to heaven both quick and easie, if it continue? For know Reader, that when thy soul is once thoroughly convinced of that righteousness that is absolutely necessary to salvation, half the work of thy conversion is done, the new creature is half formed in thee, and thy soul half saved: but when that righteousness is attained, that is, when it is brought down into thy conversation, and thou livest righteously, then is conversion finished, the new creature perfected, thy salvation secured, and thou art made a blessed man or woman.

But thou wilt say, *What am I the nearer for all this, if I neither know how righteous these Pharisees were, nor what a righteousness it is, wherein I must exceed them; pray will you tell mee how righteous they were, and how much more righteous I must bee than they.*

Answ. I will tell thee, but if I do, I must have another promise from thee, and I profess, as in the presence of the living God, if I thought that thou wouldest not grant it to mee, I would not tell thee what those things mean,
but

but rather out of pity to thee, suffer thee to lie and dye in thy ignorance; tell me, wilt thou promise God and mee, that when I have told thee what the righteousness is that thou must seek, wilt thou by the help of God endeavour with all thy soul and strength to live that righteous life this Doctrine will call for.

But stay (sayest thou) *There is no haste, tell mee what it is first.*

Ans. What doest thou scruple? Art thou afraid I will deceive thee, and make it harder than it is. Reader, to put thee out of doubt from that, I protest solemnly, as I shall answer it before the Judge of quick and dead, before whom I am confident I must give an account of what I say or write, I will to the best of my understanding, make it to be a righteousness, neither more nor less than what Jesus Christ hath made it, nor will I shew thee any thing but what I will give thee sufficient Scripture-proof for. What sayest thou now, wilt thou promise?

What dost thou stick at man? Remember what thou hast confessed already :

ready : Didst thou not confels just now, that thou didst verily beleeeve, that thou canst not possibly bee saved, except thou shalt become more righteous than any Pharisee, and doest thou now doubt whether it is best for thee to endeavour to exceed them ? What, art thou resolved to sit down short of heaven ? Ah sinner, this is not ignorantly, but wilkally to destroy thy self. Tell mee then, wilt thou resolve to live a more righteous life, or wilt thou not ? thou dying man or woman, either resolve, or read no more. I profess I did not write these lines to dally with thy soul, if I had thought that all my Readers would have proved so obstinate, I would not have lost that little time I spent in writing what thou now art vewing, nor created thee the trouble of so much reading. Let God bear witness betwixt thy soul and mine, whether I am not more desirous to have thee saved, than thou art to save thy self.

The Sinners Resolve.

Why then, I do resolve, *as God shall help mee*, I will endeavour for the future,

ture, with all my soul and strength, to seek that righteousness, whatever it bee, you shall discover from the Word of God, to bee by Will, and so my duty. Nay I further do resolve, That neither flesh nor blood, nor any sin, nor lust, or worldly interest whatever, shall hinder mee from seeking a portion in the Kingdome of my Saviour. Bear witness, O God, I am in as good earnest as ever I was in all my life.

I, sayest thou so, Let mee then tell thee for thy comfort, thou art not far from the Kingdome of God.

But to keep thee fast to thy resolution, that thou mayest neither give thy God nor mee the slip, I do here adjure thee by thy God and Saviour, by thy immortal and precious soul, by Heaven, the Crown, and all the weights of glory that are there, yea by every thing that is, or should bee dear and precious to thee, not to dare to draw back, and eat thy words again. And to tye thee yet up faster to thy resolved vow, read *Heb. 10. 38.* But the just shall live by faith, and if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. Oh that
now

now it might bee spoken of thee what follows in the next verse, 39. *But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that beleeve to the saving of the soul.* Mark sinner, if thou drawst back from so just, righteous, and holy resolution thou hast made, thou wilt fall into perdition if thou holdest on, thou art passing forward to the salvation of thy soul, if hell doth not affright thee, let heaven perswade thee to keep fast to what thou hast just now promised.

The second part of the Text lyes in the discovery of two particulars.

1 Wherein did the righteousness of the Pharisees consist, which thou must resolve to exceed.

2 What is that righteousness of life, that will set thee above the Pharisees, and put thee into a saving condition.

Of the first, What the Pharisees righteousness was.

1 The Pharisees was one of the strictest sect, or the most precise society of men among the Jews, they were most nice observers of all the outward points of worship, according to the Law

14 *A serious Exhortation*

Law of *Moses*, and therefore had the esteem of their Country-men for the most Religious people amongst them; I know thou wilt beleeve the Apostle *Paul* if hee tells thee so much, for hee was one of them himself before hee left them by being converted to *Jesus Christ*. Take his own words, *Act. 26. 4, 5.* *My manner of life from my youth, which was at first among mine own Nation, at Jerusalem, know all the Jews, which knew mee from the beginning (if they would testifie) that after the most straightest sect of our Religion, I lived a Pharisee.* Mark that well, the Pharisees (sayes *Paul*) were Religious, yea straightly Religious, yea most straightly Religious, that is, as to the outward parts of the Jewish Religion, which consisted in being natural-born Jews, children of beleeving *Abraham*, admitted into the visible Church by Circumcision the eighth day, in being constant Preachers or Hearers in their Synagogues. But all this was not enough to speak them righteous enough for the Kingdome of heaven, for remember, *Except thy righteousness exceed theirs,*
thou

thou canst in no case enter. Christ hath said it, and thou must beleieve it.

2 The Pharisees were right in their judgements in many of most of the practical truths in Religion, they held that the onely true God of *Israel* was to bee worshipped: That it was a most hainous sin to theefe, to commit murder or adultery, or to forswear a mans self, to lye, or bear false witness against a neighbour, or to bee drunk, or to bee a glutton. This must bee all true of them that they held these things as sins, yea and that they did forbear those grosser sins; I prove it thus, 1 Because Jesus Christ permitted his own followers to hear them preach, yea and bid them do what they taught, *Matth. 23. 1, 2.* Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his Disciples, saying, The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses seat (the meaning is, that they were Preachers of the Commands of God delivered by Moses) all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do, but do not after their works. But secondly, I prove that they abstained from grosser sins, at least to the outward act, 1 They ab-

abstained from drunkenness, and gluttony, I gather from that blasphemous reproach they cast upon our blessed Saviour, in calling him a *Winebibber* and a *Glutton*, which speaks that they accounted them most disgraceful sins.

2 If they had not abominated the act of murder, adultery; perjury, with drunkenness, and the like, and so refrained from them in their lives, it were impossible they could ever have got that repute amongst the *Jewes* of being the most strict religious sort of people in all their Country; who would ever have thought a society of Drunkards, or Gluttons, or Whoremongers, or perjured persons a strict religious sect? as the Apostle *Paul* confesseth they were reputed. From this that hath been said, thou mayest easily see, that thou mayest bee neither Rogue nor Whore, nor Theef, nor Drunkard, nor Lyar, and yet bee out of a state of salvation, as these Scribes and Pharisees were, though guilty of none of these sins.

3 These Pharisees were more righteous yet, for they were strict observers of

of the Sabbath day, so far as to abstain from all bodily labour, and to attend on the worship of God, in reading, praying, preaching, or expounding the Word of God, this was their Sabbath dayes imployment in their Synagogues or Churches, and Christ permitted (as I shewed before) his own Disciples to hear them, and to observe their Doctrine, and do it; but as for doing any servile work on this day, they reckoned it a greivous sin, yea if it were but dressing any provision to eat; and therefore you have them quarrelling with the Disciples of Christ for pulling ears of Corn on this day, and rubbing them in their hands to satisfie their hunger, *Luke 6.1.* And it came to pass on the Sabbath, after the first, that Jesus went through the Corn-fields, and his Disciples plucked the ears of Corn, and did eat. And certain of the Pharisees said unto them, Why do yee that which is not lawful to do on the Sabbath day? Mark Reader, See how strictly righteous they were? Sabbaths must be kept, strictly kept, nothing must take up the day with them but readings,

preaching, praying, expounding, no one must dress meat on that day, though to satisfie his hunger, thou wilt say perhaps, Is it possible for men to bee more righteous? Nay stay there, for I will shew thee presently, wherein thou must exceed them in all this, or in no case shalt thou enter into Heaven.

4 Yet farther, they were a sort of men, that for the encouragement of Religion, and upholding the external form of worship, in paying Tythes (commanded by God in the Law of Moses) were precisely just or righteous, and Jesus Christ consoloth as much unto them, *Matth. 23. 23. Wo unto you Scribes, Pharisees, Hypocrites, for yee paye the tithe of Mint, and Anise, and Cumme.* These were the least of herbs that were titheable, and it was disputable by many of their Lawyers, whether they were titheable or not, yet the Pharisees for their part, lest they might seem to rob God and his Church in the least, resolved to pay them, and Christ approves of them in that particular, by telling them, *These things yee ought to have done,* but hee adds withall, by

way

way of reproof, *See* have omitted the weightier matters of the Law, Judgement, Mercy, and Faith; and here their righteousness fell short. So Reader think, thou mayest bee an encourager of Religion in the place where thou art, mayest give freely and liberally to the maintaining of a godly Minister where thou livest, which the Lord Christ approves of, and commends, yet except thou doest somewhat more, this will not do, thou mayest still remain in a state of perdition.

§ They were charitable to the poor; This likewise thou hast acknowledged from the mouth of Christ, *Matth. 6. 2.* *When thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the Hypocrites do (meaning the Pharisees) in the Synagogues, and in the streets, that they may have praise of men, verily, I say unto you they have their reward; that is, the value of many a penny, or shilling they threw into the pors box at Church, and many peece of bread at their doors, many a penny, or teaster they distributed by the high wayes and streets, and many a beggar cryed out after them, God*
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to *A serious Exhortation*

bleſs you Maſter, and yet they were all this while but Pharifees, and curſt of God, for the text is plain, that they ſhall never bee ſaved, it ſayes, *They have their reward already.* Oh therefore Reader, dare not to fit down here, unleſs thou intendeſt to bear them company to the gates of hell, where thou mayeſt eaſily enter with them, but it is impoſſible ever to get out.

6 They were more righteous yet, for they were a praying people, and Chriſt confeſſeth as much, *Matth. 6. 5.* *And when thou prayeſt, thou ſhalt not bee as the Hypocrites are* (meaning ſtill the Pharifees) *for they love to pray ſtanding in the Synagogues, and in the corners of the ſtreets, that they may bee ſeen of men, verily I ſay unto you they have their reward.*

See here again, the Pharifees pray, love to pray, and yet Chriſt is peremptory, that they ſhall have no reward but that on earth, which ſpeaks him reſolved to deny them heaven. Reader, ſtill conſider, thou mayeſt bee one that prayeſt in thy Family to ſtop
the

the mouthes of thy friends and servants, thy godly neighbours, and Minister, that none of them may think or say, thou art an ungodly man or woman; thou mayest come to Church, and clap thy hat or hand before thy face to bee seen of men to pray, yet thou mayest bee no better than an hypocritical Pharisee, out of a state of salvation.

7 Lastly, The Pharisees beleaved the Resurrection of the dead, the blessed or miserable state of souls after this life (wherein they exceeded the Sadduces, who beleaved no Resurrection) yea and hoped, or were confident if it tared well with any at the Resurrection, it would with them. Concerning their beleef, in the great Article of the Christian faith, I mean the resurrection, thou needest no other proof of it, than their taking the *Apostle Pauls* part against the Sadduces (*Acts 23. 6, 7, 8.*) sayes *Paul*, *I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee, of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in Question.*

Object. But was Paul a Pharisee? How could Paul then bee saved, if

no Pharisees are saved?

Ans. Paul calls himself a Pharisee, because he was one, & his father was such an one, till hee was converted to Christ. But sayes hee, *I am still such an one.*
Ans. True, hee was so, but not absolutely in all parts, for hee preached Christ, whom the Pharisees crucified, but in this single point hee kept still a Pharisee, in holding the Resurrection of the dead, which the Sadduces denied, and therefore the Pharisees strike in with Paul against them, laying, *verf. 9. Wee finde no evil in this man, but if a Spirit or Angel hath spoken to him, let us not fight against God.* Who would but think that such men as these were good? 1 How tender do they seem to bee in opposing God in any revelation of his will and minde? 2 They take an Apostles part for teaching the true doctrine of the Resurrection. 3 They expresse much zeal in opposing the Sadduces for their Heresie. 4 They make a clear profession of their faith in the point of Angels, Spirits, and the Resurrection, and consequently of the immortality of their souls, and their hope

hope of a blessedness after this life; yet still remember they were Pharisees, and that Christ hath said it, *Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, yee can in no case enter into the Kingdom of God.*

Oh Reader, take warning, and do not dare to venture thy eternal life upon such a shallow, sandy righteousness as the Pharisees did.

Thus have I finished the first particular, in shewing thee what the righteousness of the Pharisees was. Now Reader, pull up thy spirits, and gird up thy loins like a man, I will shew thee now the mark that thou must shoot at, the Garland thou must run for, and the Crown thou must fight for, the righteousness that will bear thee up above the clouds, and set thee safe in the Kingdom of Heaven, among the spirits of just men made perfect, if thou resolvest to seek after it, which through the grace of God thou mayest assuredly attain to.

24 *A serious Exhortation*

Second Part, shewing, what is the righteousness of the Saints, that exceeds that of the Pharisees.

1 **T**He Pharisees, as righteous as they were, did not acknowledge Jesus Christ, nor entertain him as the Son of God, and the Saviour of the world: Now if thou wilt acknowledge him as all this, and answerably resolve to believe in him, relye upon him for pardon and strength against sin; if thou wilt love him above thy father, mother, son, daughter, house, land, living, above thy sins and lusts, and wilt readily part with them all at his command, thou hast done something the Pharisees never did, thy righteousness shall bee more than theirs, and thou shalt enter into heaven, when they shall bee shut down into hell.

2 The Pharisees beleaved it a sin to commit Murder, but they did not count it murder to bee angry with their brethren or neighbours without a cause, and to call them Fools or *Racha*. Now Reader, if thou wilt strive and struggle

Struggle all revenge and unlawful passion out of thy heart, thou art more righteous than ever the Pharisees were; Reader, see thou to it, it must bee done, without thou wilt bee content to bee no more righteous than the Pharisees were; do not dispute it, Christ will have it so, *Matth. 5. 22. I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother, without a cause, shall bee in danger of Judgement; and whosoever shall say, Thou Fool, shall bee in danger of Hell fire.* If thou wilt have it more clear, consider *1 Joh. 3. 15. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer, and yet know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.* As thou likest the casting into hell fire, or being accounted a murderer, in the judgement of God, of being void of eternal life, give way hereafter to thy proud, peevish, revengeful passionate nature.

3 The righteousness of the Pharisees condemned the act of Adultery to bee a sin, but they did not think that a lascivious look, and a lustful desire of the heart after a woman was a sin; Now Reader, if thou wilt resolve to

con-

conquer the desires of thy lustful eyes and heart, thou hast attained a righteousness the Pharisees never had; stick not at it sinner, this Command, as the whole yoke of Christ is easie, and may bee born, Christ will have it, and thou must do it, if thou resolvest to exceed the Pharisees, *Mat. 5. 28.* *I say unto you* (sayes Christ) *who so ever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed Adultery already with her in his heart.* Now think, if thou wilt still give way to thy lustful eyes, and heart, know this, that the Adulterer God will judge, and thou mayest bee such, though thou never dost commit the act.

4 The Pharisees thought it onely a sin to forswear themselves; but the Command of Christ is, *Swear not at all, Mat. 5. 34.* except it bee in cases that are true, certain, and certainly known, lawful, possible, and weighty, wherein the glory of God, and the welfare of thy neighbour, is considerably concerned, but ordinarily before a Magistrate, and then an oath is lawful. This, I must prove, because it is so stily denied by some in this age, inconsiderately enough.

The onely Objection which they have is founded on that of our Lord Christ, *Matth. 5. 34. But I say unto you swear not at all;* which saying I confess, it broken off from the scope of Christ in his whole discourse, seems to intimate so much, that it was not onely the corrupt prophane use of Oaths that hee condemneth, but that hee intended an utter abolition of the use of all, how ever circumstantiated.

Ans. 1 I grant that from this Text, not only perjury, but that swearing is forbidden.

2 I farther grant that all manner of swearing by any creature is expressly forbidden, as by Heaven, Earth, *Jerusalem*, by thy head, and that in no case what ever is it lawful to use them, and the Lord Christ gives you the reason why.

But 3 I deny, that from this Text may bee proved, that it is unlawful to swear by God himself before a Magistrate, or in the cases above expressed; My reasons are these.

1 Because the Lord Christ doth not mention that oath which was onely law-

lawful amongst the Jews, but takes up
 in chiding them for perjury in general,
 and for oaths by creatures in particu-
 lar, which *Hierom* noted long since.
Considero (inquii) quod hic Salvator non
per Deum jurare prohibuerit sed per Cae-
lum, per terram, &c.

Because the God and Father of
 our Lord Jesus did constitute the law-
 fulness of swearing by his Name, *Deut.*
6.6.13. and 10.20. Thou shalt swear by
the Name of God. Exod. 22. 1. The o. th
of Jehovah shall bee between you. Now is
 it probable that the Son should make
 that unlawful, which the Father made
 lawful? Is not this to establish the old
 Manichean heresie? That taught that
 the God of the Old Testament, and the
 God of the New, were as contrary as
 light and darkness, and their work was
 to contradict each other? If any reply,
 that it is a granted case, that Chrst a-
 bolished the Ceremonial Law, that un-
 der the Mosaical dispensation was in
 force at the appointment of his Father,
 and why may hee not then abolish this?
 I answer, But then it must bee well
 proved that an oath was a ceremony,
 and

and then I pray tell mee, what it was a type of? But secondly, I have far more ground to think it one of the Judicial Laws, as being highly subservient to put the other Laws in execution, which in many cases might have been suspended, or not with so clear justice executed, without an Oath to render the testimony evident.

3 Because hee expressly sayes of himself, *I came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it*; and can you perswade yourself, that hee can say hee will not, and yet o it? was not there once a Law for swearing, have I not proved it? But can Christ be said to fulfil that Law by an utter abolishing of it? he being the Substance, came in the room of all the Ceremonies, which were shadows; but prove that an Oath is a shadow, and I have done.

4 I argue à genere, from the nature of an Oath it self, (which if well understood) it is very unlikely that the Son of God should take away the use of it. *An Oath is an appeal to God, wherein hee is beseeched, as the only searcher of hearts, that hee would bear testimony*

wary to the truth, and would punish the swearer if hee know him to bear a false testimony: but that all such appeals to God should bee prohibited and condemned by Christ, can hardly bee affirmed without blasphemy.

x. Let mee reason from the end and use of an Oath, which will farther discover it was never the intent of Christ utterly to abolish all oathes. 1. An Oath then is that whereby men give to God the praise of his highest Wisdom, that sees into the secrets of their hearts, and sees into every corner of them what truth or falsehood lodgeth there. 2. And it yeelds him the glory of his Omnipotency, whereby it is acknowledged, hee is able to punish the perjured. 3. It honours his Justice and Mercy, because thereby men acknowledge that hee will infallibly defend truth, and bee a revenger of falsehood. Lastly, It is the bond of politick order, and humane society, neither of which can long continue without faithfulness and truth, nor could there bee that dispatch of strifes and controversies, *Exod. 22. Heb. 11. 6.* To condemn there-

therefore every Oath, seems to detract from Gods glory, and to destroy humane society, and wee may be sure the Son of God would neither be the Author of the one, nor of the other.

6 Can it bee thought without madness, that Christ would condemn the commended examples of the Saints in Scriptures? not onely of the Patriarchs, but also of the Apostles, yea and God himself, their solemn Oaths so frequently recorded, as signs of their great zeal and devotion, that it were endless to enumerate them, see that of Pauls, *Gal. 20. before God, I lie not.* And so *2 Cor. 12. 19.*

7 I might adde as farther proof, that the Prophets very often foretold, that God by his new Church under the reign of the Messiah, should bee honoured by the Oaths of his people, as *Isa. 63. 16. Hee that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth. Isa. 19. 15. In that day shall five Cities in the land of Egypt, speak the language of Canaan; and swear to the Lord of Hosts.* And can it yet bee imagined, that
when

when Jesus Christ gave birth to all other Prophecies, hee should render this abortive, and render that unlawful, which was foretold to bee one of the glories of his Kingdom?

But to conclude Reader, after all that hath been said, this is plain, that all manner of Oaths, except in the aforesaid cases, are unquestionably sinful, and must bee restrained, if thou intendest to excel the Pharisees, which is certain, that thou must, or forgo all thy hopes in Heaven.

5 The Pharisees paid Tythe most justly for the maintaining the outward form of service to God, but in their more ordinary civil matters, they were most unconscionably unjust, and fraudulent, witness the poor widows houses they devoured, and to hide the matter from the world, they made long prayers. But if thou wouldest bee more righteous than they, let thy purse bee open for the promoting the service of thy God, but seek not to repair thy layings out, by unjust oppressive coustening ways of trading, this is to rob Churches to build Hospitals, or to pick thy Cu-

Customers pocket to make an oblation to God; or to steal a sheep to make a sacrifice, bee not such an one, lest God send thee to hell for thine offering.

6 The Pharisees, as thou hast heard, were strict observers of Sabbaths, but their covetous, proud lives spake them disobedient to the God of Sabbaths; so that if thou conscientiously wilt endeavour to live over in the week dayes, what thou learnest of God on the Sabbath day, thy righteousness excels theirs.

7 They gave alms, but with an intent to bee seen, and praised of men: Give thou thine alms, but out of an unfeigned love to God, and thy needy brethren, and still thy righteousness is greater.

8 They beleeve the immortality of the soul, and the resurrection of the dead, but yet their earthly, sensual living, spake as if they understood no higher life than this that is meerly mortal. But if thou wilt beleeve thy soul shall never dye, and therefore alwayes live here on earth, as if thou wert upon the borders of Eternity, expecting a

departure into another world, in all temperance, justice, mercy, faithfulness, there is then as much difference betwixt thy righteousness, and theirs, as betwixt the clear Sun, or the brightest star, and a clod of clay or dirt.

9 Lastly, This rotten frame of external righteousness, they thought sufficient to answer the severest Law of God, and to bring them off acquitted, and fully justified at the final judgement; they dreamed not of a Saviours blood, or any necessity for the bloody sacrifice of the Son of God for the expiation of sins. But if, sinner, thou wilt resolve for thy part to rowl thy faith, and all the garments of thy inward righteousness in the blood of Christ, and never hope to finde acceptance for the most precious life of faith, and holiness that can bee lived by thee, but by the mediation of a Saviour, then hast thou hit the mark, and answered fully the expectations of thy Saviours call, who called thee to a righteousness above the Pharisees; here it is, and here thou must resolve to live and dye.

And

And now I have shewed thee what a man or woman thou mayest, and must bee, if ever thou hopest to bee saved; remember now the Vow thou madest to God before I shewed thee what that Righteousnesse is that thou must seek. And I now claime thy promise, and challenge thee on thy Vow to tell mee what thy purpose is to do in these particulars that I shall ask thee.

Art thou resolved from thy soul to love the Lord Jesus with all thy heart and strength? Wilt thou reckon neither of sin, nor lust, nor life dear to part with for him? and in a way of obedience wilt thou trust to him for his free remitting all thy sins? Wilt thou endeavour to live a more strict life, and more spiritual than ever Pharisee did? Wilt thou not onely account of Murder to bee a sin, but wilt thou abhor all unlawful anger against thy brother, or the calling of him Fool without a cause, and wilt thou think so doing a degree of Murder? Wilt thou condemn Adultery, not onely in the act, but likewise in the eye, and heart, and

36 *A serious Exhortation*

bee rather willing to pull out thy right eye, than wound thy conscience and offend thy God? wilt thou keep the Sabbath, not onely in the letter, but in the spirit, and in truth.

In a word, wilt thou resolve to pray unto thy God, and bring thy heart in to thy prayers? wilt thou conscientiously endeavour in thy calling to maintain thy self and family, and to bee able to relieve thy poor brother by thy charity, and wilt thou do both out of pure love to God, and thy neighbour, and not for the love of praise from men? wilt thou beleeve the immortality of thy soul, the resurrection of the dead, and the blessedness of those that dye in the Lord? and wilt thou endeavour a fellowship in that Resurrection by walking with God, and living a holy, innocent, humble, chaste, sober, heavenly, beleeving life? What sayest thou man? What amazed!

Sin. Ah I cannot, I dare not, I will not promise any such thing: Here is a task indeed, enough to break any mans heart, and to make mee live miserably all my dayes; I would your book had been burnt,
be-

before it came into my hands, or within my doors: What, no hopes of entring heaven without such a righteous life! It is better you were hanged, and the whole generation, of such Preachers as you are.

Ans. But sinner, Ah sinner, why so impatient, I am not thine enemy, I tell thee but the truth, *I speak the truth in Christ, I lie not*; Christ hath said it, and I dare say it again, *Except thy righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, thou canst in no case enter into the Kingdome of heaven*: If this single Text is not a witness sufficient, thou shalt have it confirmed by the mouths of one or two more, read *Heb. 12. 14. Follow peace and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.* So *1 Joh. 3. 2, 3. Beloved, now are wee the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what wee shall bee, but hee that hath this hope purifieth himself as hee is pure. I could adde an hundred Scriptures more, but here are witnesses enough to arraign and condemn thee*: What sayest thou now? What wilt thou now yet wish mee hanged, for telling nothing but what Christ, and Paul, and

John hath told thee? No, no, thou wert but in a passion, I do freely forgive thee; But oh that my hanging could keep thee from damning; how far better that I were hanged, and a hundred such Preachers as I am, so wee could expiate thy sins, and prevent the ruine of thy soul and body for ever. Were I tyed to a Gibbet I should bee quickly out of my pain, but if thou goest to hell thou wilt never bee out of thine; I should be quickly dead but thou wilt never dye as to thy torment; Sinner beleeve mee, nothing but love to thy precious soul makes mee deal so plainly with thee.

Sin. But how can I perswade my self you love mee, when you would put such a yoke of righteousness upon my neck, that I, nor my Fathers could ever bear?

Ans. It makes no matter whether thou thinkest I love thee or not; if I do not, I am sure thou wilt confess that *Jesus* did; why man! it is not I, but hee that doth thus endeavour to put this holy yoke upon thy neck, and doth intreat thee to wear it for his sake, *Matth. II. 29, 30.* Take my yoke upon you, and learn of mee, for I am meek

meek and lowly in heart, and you shall finde rest to your souls, for my yoke is easie, and my burden is light. And what is this yoke, but the holy, righteous nature, and life, which I have been all this while explaining to thee?

But sayest thou, *Do I in conscience think that the Commands of Christ may be thus obeyed, & such a righteous life lived?*

Answ. Yea in my very conscience, I do think it, that both this life may, and is lived by thousands, yea by all that are in a present state of salvation: Nay, I verily think that all the Commands of Christ, may, and are by all sound Christians obeyed (excepting some particular acts that with them are not ordinary) yea and with such an obedience, that *quoad speciem*, though not *quoad gradum*, is perfect, that is, their love, or fear, or faith to God and Christ, have the true gemine nature of these graces, and such as the Command calls for; yet I confess, none loves, or fears, or beleeves so much, but there might bee several cubits added to the stature of these graces: But Reader, it is not my desire to trouble thy head

with speculations, I have got unto thy heart, and there I will keep. If thou wilt then have thy question answered, whe her the Commands of Christ may bee obeyed in thy life, look 1 *Joh. 5. 2, 3.* *By this wee know that wee love the children of God, when wee love God, and keep his Commandements; for this is the love of God (or herein it consisteth) that wee keep his Commandements, and his Commandements are not greivous.* See how the Apostle tells thee, they may not onely bee obeyed, but that to them that love God, they are not greivous; if thou wilt neither beleeve Christ, nor his Apostles, I despair of finding credit with thee; but I will not cherish so hard an opinion of thee, I know thou beleevest them both: mee thinks I see thy heart relenting, and about to yeeld the cause; Dost not thy heats begin to cool, and thy anger to mee abate? Dost thou not begin to see how much thou hast been deceived in the matters of thy soul, and to tremble to think how many of thy neighbours have been deceived with thee? Art thou not ready to say to mee as King Agrippa once did

did to *Paul*, *Thou hast almost perswaded mee to bee a Christian?* Mee thinks I see thee kiss the book, bedew it with thy tears, and hear thee bless God that directed it to thee, or thank the friend that put it into thy hand.

Tell meethen, What is thy resolution? I cannot, must not let thee go, I have thy promise already, and God will have the performance, or will have thy life; I have already told thee wherein a greater, better, and far more noble righteousness consists, than ever the Pharisees understood, I expect thy answer.

Sinner, *Oh Sir, Pray have mee excused, I am convinced there is truth in what you say, but I have such a Trade, such a Family to look after, such company and wayes I have been many years ingaged in, I can have neither time to read, or pray, or fast, to think of God, or Christ, or heaven, or hell, or death, judgement, or anything else; my pride, my passion is so strong, and I so used to it, I cannot master them; If I lie not, nor equivocate, if I cheat not, nor over-reach my brother, I cannot trade, and so I cannot live; though*
I have

I have a good minde to what you say, and am convinced it is my duty, yet I do not think for my part, I shall ever attain to live, no not so righteously as the Pharisees did.

Ans. Is this thy last, and utmost resolution? Will no reason, nor Scripture prevail with thee? Can neither man nor God perswade thee? then no more sinner, but expect thy doom, these excuses shall not, must not serve thy turn; read it in the last clause of my Text, *Thou shalt in no case enter into the Kingdome of Heaven.* Canst thou read so sad a sentence and finde no tear to drop, nor groan to fetch? the poor Rogue at the Bar is more tender of his life, and affraid of the Gallows, than thou art of thy soul, or hell; What is thy heart a rock, or thy eyes flint? Art thou past all sense or feeling? *Thou shalt not enter into heaven*, is that nothing? But perhaps thou dost not understand what shutting out of heaven means, lest thy ignorance should undo thee, I will instruct thee.

The third part of my Text, shewing the misery of being shut out of heaven, in three particulars.

I TO bee shut out of heaven means all this, Thou shalt not see thy God in heaven, nor behold his glory, thou shalt neither love him, nor bee beloved of him; thou shalt not see, nor live with Jesus Christ, the best friend that ever thou hadst; thou shalt never see, nor understand the blessedness of those Angel-spirits that bee there, nor enjoy the fellowship of the Saints on high; thou shalt never taste of the River of pleasures that run out of the throne of the Lamb, nor behold the sweet light that streams in floods from his countenance; thou shalt never hear him call thee blessed, or pronounce thee just, nor bid thee welcome to the joy of thy Master.

Pish, sayest thou, And is this all? it is even as good as nothing, thou never heardest, or sawest, or tastedst, or didst enjoy any such things as these on earth, and yet thou sayest thou livedst happily enough with-

without them, thou ever foundest more pleasure in an Alehouse, than in a Church, and admired the melody of a wanton lascivious song above the harmony of a Psalm; a cup of wine, and a good feast at a Tavern, hath ever been more delicious to thee than the blessed Sacrament of the body and blood of Christ; yea the smiles of a wanton Harlot have been more endearing than the love and kindness of a tender Saviour; if the loss of heaven bee no more than the loss of seeing, or enjoying God, Christ, Angels, Saints, in a glorious union of the Spirit, fare them well all, give mee but the full streams of my sinful pleasures, though I swim in them to hell.

Ans. But stay sinner, sure thou art not in good earnest, think again, thou darest not say so once more, I have better hopes of thee than so, thou art sure not so far gone, certainly thou hast some reason left, the light of thy conscience is not quite put out, surely thou art no Beast, nor Devil.

Sinner. Well, it is no matter what I am, I am resolved to hazard all for this beloved gold, these pleasant cups and dishes of wines, meats, and sensual pleasures,
if

if I should not say so, I am resolved to do so, for this sinful life I will not part with; though I lose an hundred Kingdomes of heaven, and as many Crowns as there are stars, and as rich a glory as God himself can pretend to give mee: Give mee to live on earth in sin, and what care I for God, or heaven, and all his happiness?

Ans^r. Mee thinks yet sinner, I cannot beleieve thee, this is but a bravado, thou darest not say so in cool blood, no nor if thou wert on thy death-bed; I never heard a Rogue at a Gallows say so (though while hee was at liberty, was perhaps as desperate a wretch as thy self.

If yet thou thinkest thou darest both say, and do so) hear mee then once more, thou hast not heard the worst, at least not all that shutting out of Heaven implies, it signifies thus much more.

2 If thou art shut out of Heaven, thou must bee shut out of earth too, the Paradise above shall not onely bee kept against thee with a flaming sword, but thou shalt lose the happiness of cursed Cain, of being a vagabond upon the earth.

Sinner,

Sinner, the time is coming, and then will bee, that all thy gold and silver, with rich apparel, with all thy house and lands, livings, with all thy meats and drinks, thou must leave behinde thee to bee devoured by the merciless flames that shall consume the world, what wilt thou get then to delight thy liquorish palate, or to quench thy drunken thirst, or to cover thy rotten carcass, or to satisfie thy beastly unsatiate lust? I pray thee Reader think, am I telling thee a fable? or art thou a dying man or woman? Is not thy life most, or much of it spent already, how often more dost thou think will the clock strike round, before it strikes the hour that thou must dye? art thou sure of the morrow? doth not the bell hang in thy Parish-steeple that must towl thy knell? doth not thy coffin and thy grave stare thee in the face, and tell thee wee must shortly have thy body? and dost not thou then know for certain, that all the fewel of thy sensual pleasures, and so the pleasures themselves, must bee left behinde?

What sayest thou now Reader, how dost

dost thou like shutting out of heaven, when thou must not onely lose the delights there, but all that are upon the earth?

What is thy minde yet changed? I speak man, thou hast time yet given thee to make thy choice; wilt thou endeavour to bee more righteous than the Pharisees, or sit down content to bee shut out of heaven? Thou foolish sinner, why dost thou delay thy answer, what difficulty can there bee in the question that I ask thee? heaven thou knowest, and righteousness thou knowest, for I have told thee what they mean already: Ah that mans heart should bee so sottish to make it a doubtful case, whether it is better to chuse heaven with righteousness, or hell with wickedness!

Mee thinks I hear thee begin to cry out, Good Lord, what a streight hath this book driven mee to: I did not think these foolish Preachers had half so much reason on their sides, I begin now to think it is hard to hear them, or to read them without being of their minds, though I care not much for heaven, yet
I am

I am loath to lose heaven and earth together. What shall I do? there is nothing can keep mee out of heaven, but an unrighteous wicked life, but how shall I leave my sin? I know not, I am not used to read and pray, and repent in tears, and I care not to begin; but I am used to swear and lie, and drink, and whore, and them I cannot leave, but if I do not I cannot enter into heaven, what shall I do? Oh that I might dye like a beast, and lye in a benumbed state of death for ever, free from all sense or feeling of any joy, so I might live on earth but as I list: Oh my dear works of darkness, I do so love you, that I could bee willing to bee a dog, or any other beast at death, so I might but have your company while I live.

Reply. Ah Fool, Fool, Fool! What Devil hath been the Priest, to espouse thee so nearly to thy filthy, stinking, rotten sinful life, that neither Christ, nor his Ministers can perswade thee to a divorce? Thou senseless sinner, hast thou not too justly provoked thy Maker to repent that hee made thee a man? what, content to dye like a beast, and
lose

lose the glorious priviledge of an immortal life, for a base filthy sin! how much pitty is it that ever thou wert man or woman, and not rather a dog or toad? thou art a disgrace to the humane nature; but thou wretched desperate sinner, I tell thee thou shalt not have thy wish, because thou art so unwilling to live like a son or daughter of God on earth, thou shalt not have so much happiness to lye down in thy grave like a dog, thou shalt assuredly go to hell, and so to torment, therefore shutting out of heaven speaks more sadness than I have acquainted thee with.

3 Lastly, Consider this, if thou wilt not resolve to live more righteously than ever any Pharisee did, Assure thy self, that Jesus Christ that shuts thee out of heaven, shall shut thee up in Hell, that tongue that pronounceth the righteous blessed, shall pronounce thee cursed, and hee that bids them enter into the joy of their Master, shall command thee to descend into torments with the Devils, there shalt thou receive the stroak of his iron rod,

that shall dash thee in peeces, and bear the stroaks of his reuengeful arm for thy abusing of his tender and long-suffering mercy. There shalt thou feel the worrowings of an intraged conscience, and suffer the tortures of devouring flame, and this for ever and ever.

Reader, If thou art obstinate, deceive not thy self, God will not bee mocked, and in his punishing thee for sin, hee will not seem to bee in ieast; for as the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is not a tittle of what I say, but what is contained in thy Bible; if I shew it thee to bee there, thou wilt not sure question whether it bee true; Read then, and let thine own eyes bear witness, *Matth. 25. 41.* Then shall hee say unto them on the left hand, Depart from mee yee cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels, *Mark. 9. 47.* And if thine eye offend thee, that is, thy sin as dear as thy eye hinder thee in the way to heaven, pluck it out (that is, cast it away, and leave that sin) *It is better for thee to enter into the Kingdome of God with one eye (yea with no eye) than having two eyes to bee* cast

cast into hell fire, where their worm dyeth not, and the fire is not quenched. Rev. 21.8. But the fearful (that is, such as fear to part with sin, and life, and all for Christ) and unbelieving, and abominable, and Murderers, and Whoremongers, and Sorcerers, and Idolaters (such are covetous men) and all lyars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, this is the second death.

Rev. 20. 10. And the Devil that deceived them, was cast into the lake of the fire, and the brimstone, where the Beast and the false Prophets are, and shall bee tormented day and night for ever and ever,

2 Thess. 1. 7, 8. When the Lord Jesus shall bee revealed from heaven with his mighty Angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall bee punished with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.

Now thou hast read all these Texts, I cannot think thou wilt unsay them all, thou hast the witness both of John and Paul, and Christ himself; I am sure their testimony will passe in the Court.

of Heaven, and there it is, and onely there, that thou must take thy trial, receive thy sentence, and bee sent to this dreadful punishment; what hast thou more to say?

The Sinners last Refuge.

I have here read, sayest thou, That there is no salvation without I live an exceeding righteous life, it is plain Scripture; I cannot deny it; and surely my drunkenness, my swearing, lying, whoring, neglect of praying, reading, do not speak mee an exceeding righteous man; What shall I do? shall I think my self in so miserable estate, that if I dye before I change my life, I must go to hell? Oh I dare not; what then? to leave my sins? I will not, but how then? shall I keep them? if I do, the Scripture is plain, I cannot go to heaven; truly I know not what to say; but perhaps there may be some way to heaven that the Scripture doth not tell us of, I resolve to venture it at least, and I know I shall have many to bear mee company, and thus I will satisfy my self, and continue as I am.

*Ans. A poor shift: Thou hopest
to God*

God will finde a way to save thee, that hee hath not revealed, that is in plain English thus, thou hopest that God hath told thee by Jesus Christ, that except thou art more righteous than the Pharisees, thou canst not bee saved, yet hee intendeth the quite contrary, and will save thee and others, though thou livest more wickedly than ever the Pharisees did: What is this but to put God the Father and Jesus Christ at variance, and make them contradict each other? yea to think so impudently of God, that hee sent his onely Son into the world to deceive and cheat it in a company of untruths, as this would bee one, if it should ever bee, as thou art bold to hope.

But I have somewhat in my Text still behinde, that will spoil thy hopes, and convince thee of this wicked imagination; sayes my Text (*Thou shalt in no case enter*) mark that (*in no case*) what do those three words mean? Do they not plainly signifie, that God hath shut up all other wayes to heaven, or that there are no means left by which thou canst possibly scape the misery of the

damned, but onely this of becoming righteous?

1 Perhaps thou thinkest to hide thy self in the Grave, and to lurk close in the corner of that dark room.

But Fool, never think of it, for the doors of those chambers of death shall all flye open, the Trumpet shall sound, and thou amongst the rest shalt arise, and stand up before him.

2 Perhaps thou conceivest a way to escape by crying for mercy: Ah sinner, that will not do neither, for then it will bee too late, there is no room for repentance, nor for mercy, when thou hast once left this earth.

3 What, dost thou think to plead the blood of Christ? It will bee answered by Christ that shed it, that hee shed it only for the penitent, beleeving, godly sinner, and thou art none of those.

4 Dost thou think then to flye from the Justice of God the Son, to the Mercy of God the Father? and if thou shouldest, I tell thee, hee would send thee back again unto Christ his Son, and with all acquaint thee, that hee hath

hath committed all Judgement to his Son, and is resolved to spare none that his Childe Jesus will not save, and thou art sure already of this, that Christ his Son will save none, but such whose righteousness hath exceeded that of the Pharisees. Read my Text, hath he not there said it, and canst thou think that upon his Judgement-seat hee will deny this Sermon, or this part of it that hee preached upon the earth? Shall so great a Judge as Christ, make a Law, and publish it on the earth, and then upon the Bench deny hee never said so, or then repent it? no, no Sinner, it is impossible hee should deny himself, or his word.

Now Reader, if thou bee a man or woman, whose heart and life is not yet changed, if thou hast not a righteousness above the Pharisees, in what a sad case dost thou see thy self, or at least thou mayest, if thou wert not blinde; whither canst thou turn thy self, but thou must see hell and damnation before thee, and ready to devoure thee?

Sinner. *Oh Sir, what shall I do to bee saved?*

E 4

I tell

36 *A serious Exhortation*

I tell thee how? there is one way left thee to salvation, and but one, and my Text hath told it, Endeavour to bee exceeding righteous in thy life, and that is the way to life; let thy love and faith to God and Christ Jesus, let thy sincere obedience to all his Commands to the utmost that thou art able, let thy thoughts, thy words, thy prayers, thy alms speak thee a more righteous man or woman than the strictest Scribe and Pharisee that ever breathed upon the earth, this, this is the way to heaven. If after all this thou art resolved to continue as thou art, thy blood bee on thine own head, I have discharged my duty.

Sinner. Lord have mercy upon mee! What a blinde wretch have I been, thus to mistake my way! and think I have been going to heaven, when I now see plainly I am in the broad road to hell! Well, I thank God. I am not yet swallowed up of that gulph, Mercy hath hitherto kept mee out; and I am resolved to abuse long-suffering mercy not an hour longer. It is but leaving my drunken companions, and

my filthy Harlots, and who would not leave them to gain the love of God, and my blessed Saviour? It is but leaving my lying, swearing, and turning my curses into prayers and blessings, and what harm is there in prayers and blessings? I am sure they will please my God better, and trouble my conscience less. It is but loving my neighbour as myself, but especially my God and Saviour, with all my heart, soul, and strength; and to account of gold and silver, friends, credit, and my sins, as dung and dross in a compare to them, and I am sure, that they are better than them all, and so they deserve as much and more of love from mee: It is but to pray, praise, and thank them for the offer of eternal life, and to rely upon the blood of Jesus for pardon and acceptance, and I am sure that Jesus Christ will prove my fastest friend.

Well, my resolution is this, God, men, and Angels, shall see I am another man; Heaven shall see mee more on my knees in my Closet; it shall bee my next work when I have read out this book, my Family shall see and hear mee more in reading, and praying, I and my house shall

58 *A serious Exhortation*

shall serve the Lord, and all my neighbours shall see mee walk in those very wayes that I have formerly most prophanely laughed and scoffed at. I know it will bee my turn now to bee scorned, and derided by others, yea some of my familiar drunken companions; but what care I? Christ suffered more for my sake, and I remember holy Paul, that was once a persecuter of honest-hearted Christians, was afterwards content to bee persecuted for being such an one himself. But let them laugh on; I am sure, I am a dying man, and if I keep on to follow Christ, I shall shortly bee in heaven, and then above their scorn, where I am sure they will never come, if they repent not, and seek a righteousness above the Pharisees.

I have read what this righteousness is, and now I will try it in my life, there is no more time for talk, I will up and do.

Caution.

Yea, and do so, thou Son or Daughter of God, for so I dare call thee, if thou holdest this resolution to the death. Onely let mee caution thee ^{that} thou art so set and resolved
upon

upon the work, Remember that of thy Saviour, *Joh. 15. 4, 5.* As the branch cannot bear fruit of it self, except it abide in the Vine; no more can yee, except yee abide in mee. I am the Vine, yee are the branches, hee that abideth in mee, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without mee yee can do nothing. And so *Phil. 2. 13.* For it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do, of his good pleasure. Again, *Rom. 8. 26.* Likewise the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, for wee know not what wee should pray for as wee ought, but the Spirit it self maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered. *1 Cor. 10. 12.* Let him that thinketh hee standeth, take heed lest hee fall.

By these Texts I would put thee in minde of thine own weakness, and self-insufficiency. Set to the working out thy salvation with fear and trembling, but look up to Christ thy treasury, that hath a stock of grace and strength for thee to spend upon till death, and to all eternity; and now let mee intreat thee to form thy conclusion thus with
the

60 *A serious Exhortation, &c.*

the holy Apostle, Philip. 4. 13. *I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth mee.* Thou mayest with Christ do wonders, but without him just nothing. *Ask and thou shalt have, seek and thou shalt finde, knock and it shall bee opened.*

And lastly, I say unto thee, *Watch and pray, lest thou enter into temptation.*

Now the Lord bless thee, and make thy root to spread on the Mountain of the Lord, let his dew fall upon thee, and give thee to flourish as a pleasant branch in the Vineyard of thy God. Let not that curse come ever near thee? It is a barren tree, cut it down, why cumberst it the ground? but bee thou ever laden with fruit, that death may finde thee mellow, and ripe for Heaven.



A Post-

A Postscript.

I Am sufficiently aware of what exceptions the more curious may make against the management of this small Discourse, as

1 That I have observed a method somewhat too loose.

2 That I have handled the *Species* before the *Genus*, that is, spoken to the nature of inherent righteousness, without giving any account of righteousness in general.

3 That I have scarce touched upon the other *species* of righteousness, which lyes in the active and passive obedience of our Lord and Saviour.

4 That I have not handled fully the nature of inherent righteousness, that is the subject of the whole, having neglected in a manner the explication of any of its affections.

And lastly, that I have insisted too little on the Doctrinal part.

Ans. It may bee some satisfaction to thee that I know my defects before thou tellest mee of them; but thou must know,

1 That

A Postscript.

1 That I intended to have delivered my whole minde on this subject in one sheet, to make it as little chargeable as I could.

2 That I intended it for the meaner sort of my people, whom by long observation I have found them to understand mee least, when I think I speak best, and most accurately.

3 I do not conceive my method so loose as thou mayest imagine, seeing I have all along kept close to the parts of the Text (and if I mistake not) they lye together in as good a posture as the nature of things in their dependency can well bear.

4 And as to my speaking so little to the righteousness of the Saints as is treasured up in the active and suffering life and death of the Lord Jesus.

I reply thus,

1 I have not wholly omitted it, but have besprinkled the whole with blood, that the attentive Reader may plainly see, that I little dreamed that the purest inherent righteousness could bee meritorious.

2 And I was bound to follow the in-

A Poscript.

intendments of the Text that points most directly at the righteousness of the souls and spirits of men that must act them in their lives.

3 And I knew, that it is this inward righteousness the common people I speak to, see lesse need of, and it is their ignorance of this, which is the ordinary rock on which they split, and it was my duty here to help to save them if I could.

If this will not satisfie thee, I cannot help it, I writ not to please all, but to profit some; if the Lord shall please to bless it to that end, it will content mee, though it doth not thee.



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